1465 b. 3736.(2)

THE PRAYER; A POEM.

1757

THE PRAYER;

OR,

THE MUSE ON HER KNEES FOR BRITANNIA;

A POEM.

The Lord our God be with us, as he was with our fathers; let him not leave us nor forsake us. 1 KINGS.

EDINBURGH.

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PREFACE.

IN this licentious and degenerate age, any thing of a ſerious nature, or moral tendency, when it appears in the world, is either overlooked with an eye of ſupercilious contempt, or made the univerſal ſubject of ridicule and banter: and when a performance aſſumes a public dreſs now-a-days, it is ſeldom, if ever, attended with a favourable reception, if it is ſo unfortunate (or rather lucky) as not to coincide with the particular humour and manners of the times; and, commonly, the leſs of religion it has for an ingredient, the conformity is the more intimate and ſtriking, and the commendations and applauſes it meets with, the more hearty and general. No doubt there are a number of exceptions to what I have alledged, whoſe approbation and diſapprobation depend on a ſtandard aſcertained upon a proper and permanent foundation, and not on the fluctuating and precarious diſpoſition of popular opinion: but tho' there are to this, as to every other general rule, perſons who may be ſubſtracted from it; yet, certainly the aſſertion will be juſtified by the ſtricteſt propriety with reſpect to the univerſal taſte of the preſent age. This being the melancholy caſe, the author of the following poem preſumes to declare, that he is altogether uncon-

unconcerned and indifferent about whatever may happen in conſequence of its publication, as he has diſcharged his duty, both with relation to his country, his conſcience, and his God; and hopes at leaſt, he will be treated by every generous patriot, and ſincere chriſtian, with lenity and candor. The ſubject is of the moſt momentous concern, and critical importance to all in general, and to every individual in particular; no leſs than our lives, our properties, freedom, and families, and every thing accounted excellent and valuable by mankind: and all the author regrets is, that his performance ſhould be animated with ſo little life, ſpirit and energy.

THE

THE PRAYER, A POEM.

O Thou, eternal sov'reign of the skies!
The first, the last, the greatest, and the best!
Round whose celestial throne, in radiant throngs,
Their faces veil'd within their lucid wings,
Myriads of high exalted spirits stand,
Lost in amasement, love, and extasy,
While they behold, admire thee, and adore;
Tune up their golden organs to thy praise,
Till heav'n's high courts resound with notes divine!
O thou, on whom all nations bend their eyes
For conduct and direction, and for aid;
To whose supreme and universal sway,
Kingdoms, and kings, and princes owe their birth;
Flourishing in wealth, or sunk in indigence,
Illustrious, or inglorious at thy smile!
O make Britannia still thy chiefest care,
Direct her councils, and succeed her arms,
And guard her rights, her liberty and laws,
And hand them down to ages yet unborn!
May none assume the diadem and robe,

Or ever ſit on her imperial throne,
But thoſe of Proteſtant deſcent, to ſway
The peaceful ſceptre round her happy land:
Behold thy ſervant, O indulgent God!
Her royal ſov'reign, ſhepherd, and her friend,
Her guardian, and defender of the faith!
With eyes of favour, and regard divine.
Support his honeſt and his upright heart,
And keep him as the apple of thine eye.
Prolong his life, important, precious life,
Precious to millions by his ſceptre rul'd;
A ſceptre, not of tyranny and pride,
Caprice, oppreſſion, cruelty and chains,
But clemency, compaſſion, wiſdom, truth,
And kindneſs, ſuch as warms the parent's breaſt;
Integrity and candour, known in few,
Of thoſe diſtinguiſh'd by the regal robes!
O make the crown to flouriſh on his head,
His rev'rent head, by time's maturing hand
With ſtreaks of ſnowy whiteneſs ſilver'd o'er,
And ſhow'r down conſtant bleſſings from above;
Such bleſſings ſeen, unvariably, to crown
Conſpicuous worth, and merit full of years;
On him, the nurſing father of thy church,
And chiefeſt glory of the Britiſh iſles!
Make honour ſtill to ſmile upon his reign,
And fame around his throne expand her wings,
Blowing aloud her trumpet of applauſe;
While victory, illuſtrious warrior, crown'd
With ſhining wreaths of glory, bravely won;

Virtue,

irtue, ſeraphic fair, ſmiling benign,
nd clad in veſtments purer than the ſnow;
eligion, amiable goddeſs, bright
all the dazzling radiance of the ſkies;
ttentive liſten, and approve each note.
nd when, divine Creator, when the thread
f brittle life, meaſur'd by thee, is ſpun,
un by the hand of piety and truth;
hen age ſits languid in each hollow'd eye,
d lurks in furrows which itſelf has made,
ff in each joint, and cold in ev'ry vein,
d beckons from the feebly-beating pulſe;
d down thy angel, on the wings of love,
e in his ſacred, kindly boſom laid,
mount his kindred ſpirit to the ſkies,
ntly retiring from its houſe of clay;
ere to receive a crown, which boaſts its worth
m thee thyſelf, and immortality;
thy right hand to reign for ever more.
d, O! protect his offspring as thy own:
y they be all diſtinguiſh'd by their worth;
rnal worth, the beauties of the mind,
merit charact'riſtic of the few,
choſen few, high in thy love divine;
y their greatneſs, dignity and rank.
chiefly he, auſpicious prince, indulge,
hom the hopes of Albion center all,
ev'ry eye ſolicitous obſerves,
Virtue, n each endowment and exalted grace,
nific of the monarch or the man.

Plant ev'ry godlike virtue in his breaſt,
Make it to glow with paſſions moſt refin'd,
High-born and royal, worthy of his ſire,
And worthy he who fills the Britiſh throne.
Make them all ſhine as ſtars in yonder ſkies,
Conſpicuous examples great and good.
Him like the ſun in noon-tide ſplendors thron'd,
Diffuſing life and joy thro' ev'ry ſoul,
And ſcatt'ring wide his favours all around.
And when the cloud, which envious death brings on,
Obſcures their luſtre, dimm'd, to ſhine no more
In this inferior world, may they ariſe
In mid-day glory eminently bright,
In happier climes, peculiarly their boaſt,
A purer ether, and a clearer ſky;
Where they ſhall ſparkle with encreaſing rays,
While vaſt eternity itſelf endures.
No danger of eclipſe, or ſhades to hide
Their bright effulgence: Thou the fountain-head
Of light and day, ineffible, immenſe,
And inacceſſible to mortal eye,
Beam'ſt forth the fulneſs of thy glory, whence
They ſtill may be ſupply'd, and drink for ever.

Thou art a God of boundleſs pow'r poſſeſt,
Uncircumſcrib'd but by infinitude.
Thou ſend'ſt thy mandates uncontroul'd abroad:
The earth thy footſtool, and the heav'ns thy throne:
Thy mandates, whether gracious or ſevere,
Loaded with judgments, or with bleſſings fraught,

By

By miniſters in number far beyond
In greatneſs and tremendous dignity,
Where thought can ſoar, or language can deſcribe,
Obedient to thy great creating word,
Nature aroſe from nothing into birth,
Beauteous and lovely as it now appears,
Magnificent, harmonious, and auguſt.
Supported by thy vaſt almighty arm,
And govern'd by thy wiſdom and thy care,
It ſtill exiſts a monument of thee,
Supreme in uncreated excellence;
And all its ſprings and wheels concordant move,
To perfect and complete the glorious plan
Form'd in thy mind, primeval with thy ſelf,
And bring about thy great deſigns, decreed
In goodneſs, and philanthrophy divine!

And did'ſt thou rear the world's vaſt fabric up,
Enormous work! and worthy of a God!
With wonders big, from nothing's empty womb?
And wilt thou not watch over ev'ry part,
And make it inconteſtible as day,
A ſuperintendent providence divine?
But chiefly, that renown'd and happy ſpot,
Britannia call'd; that object which thine eye
Has ſtill beheld with more than general care?
Juſtice before thee weighs her equal ſcale,
And mercy, placid cherub, gracious ſmiles.
Truth is the ſacred baſis of thy throne;
Truth perſevering and inflexible;

And holineſs, immaculately pure,
Well pleas'd, around thee throws her whiteſt robes.
Then, O aſſert her juſt and righteous cauſe,
And be thyſelf the avenger of her wrongs.
Reſtore her honour, ſullied in the field;
Her valour foil'd, and glory, how obſcur'd!
Inſpire her ſons with ardor for the fight;
Such ardor as her anceſtors could boaſt,
And in their boſoms burn'd with ten-fold rage,
Confronting danger in each dreadful form;
And loud proclaim it to the liſt'ning world,
That Thou art her protector and her friend,
The mortal foe of all who dare oppoſe
Her intereſts, her liberties, or laws.

Blast and defeat the curs'd, malignant ſchemes,
Which France, inſidious, and imperious foe,
In height of fury, avarice, and pride,
Ambition, malice, envy, and revenge;
Puſh'd on by all that hell itſelf inſpires,
Or hot-brain'd Rome, that other hell on earth,
Plans for the ruin of her fav'rite iſles.
May her attempts, her lawleſs, bold attempts,
Be like the tranſient meteor in the air,
Engender'd from the vapour's firy womb;
Which formidable looks, indeed, a while,
And a few moments flaſhes in the eye,
Floating in ſtreaming light; then dies away,
And, inſtant, leaves an empty void behind,
If but a breath, blown from the Zephyr's mouth,

Fans,

Fans, gently mild, the undulating air!
Or like the ſurge, which heaves its ſwelling ſides,
A liquid mountain, threat'ning as it rolls;
And, ſweeping, ruſhes on the adverſe beach,
Roaring in hollow, hoarſe and mutt'ring ſounds,
Proud in its tow'ring altitude; then breaks;
And from the ſhore in empty foam retires,
Its height menacing, level with the ſtrand.
If ſhe to council call her haughty peers;
Thoſe pillars of her villainy and guilt,
And fierce ſupporters of her lawleſs pow'r;
Confound their wiſdom, and their politics,
And tumble all their projects to the ground,
As falls the tott'ring wall before the ſtorm.
Their proſpects, and imaginations, big
With honour, glory, and immortal fame
Gain'd in the field, triumphant o'er her foes;
Make like the fleeting viſions of the night,
When airy phantoms skim before the eyes,
And dreams deluſive cheat the wiſhing ſoul.

If they equip their ſquadrons for the ſea,
Vainly embolden'd from ſuch feeble aid,
Blow with thy breath, and ſend the ſtorm abroad;
The ſtorm with ruin and deſtruction wing'd;
And ſink them to the bottom like a ſtone:
Or daſh them, helpleſs, on the fatal rock,
'Till all the ſea is cover'd with the wreck,
To curſe their folly, impotence, and guilt.
Or if they dare her hardy fleets engage,

(How

(How formidable, how replete with dread,
Loaded with thunders, to each diſtant ſhore!)
If ſo audacious and precipitate,
Melt all their courage like the morning dew,
Scatter'd, and loſt before the riſing beams
Which burſt refulgent from the bluſhing eaſt,
When from his couch the ſaffron ſun glows forth:
Direct their cannons roaring ſtorms aſide,
Falſely obedient to their ſureſt aim,
And make them ſtrike ſubmiſſive to her flag.

Or if ſhe blows the trumpet's martial note,
To call th' accouter'd reg'ments to the field,
Thouſands on thouſands preſt, a num'rous band,
Proudly indulging high aſpiring thoughts
Of glory, grandeur, riches, and domain,
Depending on their countleſs multitudes,
Their ſteeds, their ſwords, and military ſkill;
Infatuate their minds, O God of battle,
And turn their pointed weapons on themſelves,
Till ſlaughter'd heaps ly breathleſs on the plain,
Juſt victims to ambition's boundleſs luſt;
And make the earth drunk with their hoſtile blood.
May victory ne'er ſit upon their creſts,
But fly, enamour'd of Britannia's iſles,
Her daſtard ſtandards, and impotent troops;
Greatly with them diſdaining to reſide,
Ignobly ſunk in ſlavery and chains,
The ſons of rapine, cruelty, and blood,
Tyrannic, pride, and arbitrary ſway,
Enthuſiaſm, and bigotted Rome,

Known

Known by her halters, tortures, racks, and fire,
Her inquiſition's black infernal court,
Where hell and all its curſed fiends preſide;
Her ſuperſtition, and ſatanic rage.

RESTRAIN her, then, O thou whom wiſdom guides,
Wiſdom celeſtial, and omniſcient ſtill;
Almighty, and eternal Lord of hoſts!
And curb her pride, her inſolence and rage,
No more pernicious to the continent,
And Albion, that chief rival of her crown,
That, like the torrent flood, ſwell'd high with rain,
Which for a while o'erflow'd its feeble banks,
And ravag'd and deſtroy'd the fruitful fields,
Hurrying along flocks, herds, and cots, and ſwains,
In rapid ſweep profound; ſhe may ſubſide,
To ſpread alarm and conſternation round,
And burden ev'ry echo with the voice
Of hardſhip, tumult, blood, and death no more.
Return each flagrant ill upon herſelf:
Each ill how complicated! right'ous God;
And all the crimes which ſhe, from time to time,
Has perpetrated, on her guilty head;
Demanding vengeance, ſpeedy vengeance, down;
Monſt'rous, deteſtable, and heinous crimes,
And worthy of the devil and of Rome!
That, thus retorted doubly, ſhe may learn,
Be forc'd to learn, altho' againſt her will,
Within her own dominions to reſide,
And be the plague of neighb'ring ſtates no more.

Her own dominions, ah! indeed, too large,
And too extenſive far, to be the ſeats
Of tyranny, ill-minded head-ſtrong fiend,
The wheel, the dungeon, gibbet, and the chain,
The only badges of her dignity.
The piercing ſhrieks of ſuff'ring victims wreck'd,
The muſic ſounding ſweeteſt in her ear;
Slaves, ſordid ſlaves, in iron ſhackles bound,
Low-bended on the knee of fulſome praiſe,
Abject ſubmiſſion, and humility,
Cringing obſequious, all below a man;
The only objects that delight her eye,
Her ſupercilious and diſdainful eye.
But better here, than up and down the world,
Where'er her pow'r could fix her int'reſt firm,
And make the nations tremble at her name;
Or bribery could bind in golden chains,
The tinſel-lur'd and toy-caught hearts of men.
Doſt thou not mount ſublime the rapid car,
That whirls the ſweeping tempeſt thro' the ſky?
Does not the hollow of thy hand contain
The boundleſs waters of the deep profound;
Whether at reſt, or frantic ſwell'd to heav'n?
Is not the thunder's loud-reſounding wheel
Harſh rattling croſs yon chryſtal battlements;
The awful language of thy dreadful voice?
The forky lightning's ſlanting flakes of fire,
Th' inſufferable flaſhes of thine eye,
Keen in effulgent glory? and the ſun
The ſmalleſt ray of that reſplendent robe,

And

And unapproachable, around the throne?
And all creation but a point or grain,
Before thy vaſt all-comprehenſive view?
Can'ſt thou not then diſcomfit in the field,
One ſilly, trifling, coward, pigmy foe,
Th' invet'rate foe of liberty and truth,
Thy ſacred temples, and thy holy rites?
Cannot that arm which rear'd this pond'rous globe,
How eminent, in magnitude auguſt!
Built up the columns of yon arch'd domain,
The ſeat of worlds, in glory and in pomp
Ineffable, ſurpaſſing! overturn
A handful of impotent, daſtard troops,
Before thy eye as reptiles on the ground,
Or bubbles floating on the lucid rill,
Which crawl, and die, which ſwell, and burſt to nothing?

But O immanent ſource of life and joy!
Alpha, Omega, antient of days!
Am I too eager and importunate?
Forgive it, O indulgent Sire, forgive;
My country, ah! my country now demands
My ardent wiſhes, and moſt fervent pray'rs,
Thrills in each vein, and throbs in ev'ry pulſe,
My converſation and concern by day,
The conſtant ſubject of my nightly dreams.

Can I behold Britannia, once a name
Which rous'd to ev'ry great and glorious deed,

Each daring project and bold enterprize;
Worthy of Rome, imperial Rome herſelf,
E're prieſtly craft and papal tyranny
Sunk and diſgrac'd her wretched, wretched ſtate;
With all the terror of the thunder's voice,
And martial ardor of the trumpet's ſound;
When freedom and religion fir'd the breaſt,
And bid the high-born energy inſpire
Her warlike ſons to brace the buckler on,
And draw the glitt'ring faulchion from the ſheath?
Can I behold her, who, in former days,
Days ſtill unequal'd in the rolls of fame,
Mounted her ſteed, ſwift-bounding o'er the plain,
Prancing, and ſnorting, flaſhing ſparks of fire
From ev'ry eye-ball, ſwell'd with keen delight,
And neighing eager for the bloody charge,
Broke thro' whole ſquadrons of her thickeſt foes,
Heaps of dead bodies ſtrew'd on ev'ry ſide,
O'erthrown and mangl'd by her conqu'ring arm;
Her arm ſuſpended never but to kill,
Not one or two, but thouſands at a blow;
And then return'd, the glorious conqueſt won,
Loaded with wreaths of honour and applauſe;
Her ſword, all bloody, brandiſh'd in her hand,
As if well pleas'd to triumph in the field,
And drunk with ſlaughter; while her courſer paws
The reeking ground, glad of the vict'ry gain'd,
Rearing and foaming, ſtain'd with crimſon gore,
Proud in majeſtic attitude erect?
Can I behold her, (O my God, indulge

This ardent warmth, perhaps too much inflam'd;)
Before whom, on the knee of abject ſuit,
High-rais'd, illuſtrious on her ſparkling throne,
The haughty Gaul, in humbleſt accents, begg'd
The palm of peace, on any terms obtain'd,
Agreeable to her high imperial will;
When Edward conquer'd in the fields of death,
On Creſſi's ever-memorable plain:
When Agincourt drunk rivers of her blood,
And groan'd beneath whole mountains of her ſlain:
Or when that matchleſs thunder-bolt of war,
Great Marlb'rough drove his fiery courſer on,
Midſt gaſping thouſands of her choiceſt troops,
The dread of empires; and her vaunting boaſt,
Biting the earth, indignant, drown'd in gore,
On Blenheim's glorious and immortal field:
Can I behold her, then ſo much renown'd,
So high exalted on the wings of fame;
Fame, deathleſs fame, proud of th' illuſtrious load,
To waft it round to ev'ry wond'ring clime,
And make each tongue ambitious in her praiſe;
Her praiſe, by which all eternize their names,
Who, emulous, endeavour to excel
On ſuch a noble and tranſcendent theme?
Can I behold her, (O my heart, be ſtill;
Nor burſt with anguiſh too acute to bear!
Refrain my eyes, nor thus with floods guſh forth,
And O each nerve aſſume your wonted ſtrength,
Nor let the pen forſake my trembling hand)
Behold her courage, skill, and conduct fled,
That high-born intrepidity of ſoul,
And martial fire which erſt her boſom warm'd,

In-

Inglorious ſleep ſecure in ſlothful eaſe,
Lull'd by inchanting pleaſure's ſoothing voice,
And dandl'd to deſtruction on her knee;
Nor hear the trump which glory blows aloud,
Nor ſee the laurels victory holds out,
And ſhining wreaths to grace the conqu'ror's brow,
While property, while freedom, and while peace,
Undaunted zeal, and magnanimity
Exerted in our country's ſacred rights,
Our family's, and all that's dear to man;
Thoſe brighteſt ornaments of ev'ry land,
And nobleſt graces of the human breaſt,
Affect like tinkling cymbals in the ear!
O ignominy! O diſgrace and ſhame!
Highly unworthy of the Britiſh name!

O SOV'REIGN arbiter of peace and war,
Th' alone impartial and unerring judge,
Of real merit and intrinſic worth;
Who canſt obſerve, with ſcrutiny moſt juſt,
That excellence ariſing from deſert,
Or from a falſe and hypocritic ſhow;
Who turns the minds and ſentiments of kings
As yonder fickle weather-cock the gale,
Or ſtraw ſuſpended on the lucid wave!
Was it not thine all-conqu'ring arm divine
That gave tremendous keenneſs to her ſteel;
Her ſteel which reach'd the moſt intrepid heart,
And carry'd conqueſt ever on its point?
Gave mortal thunders to her burſting guns;

Her

Her guns terrific to whole hoſts of foes,
To ſweep with dread exploſion thro' the ſky,
And mow down ſquadrons, welt'ring in their gore?

Was it not thy auſpicious influence
That guided all her councils in debates;
Her councils ever eminently own'd
By patriotiſm, and integrity,
The common int'reſt and the public good,
And ev'ry ſcheme and undertaking ſtamp'd
With the propitious ſignet of ſucceſs?
Is not thy great unconquerable arm
The ſame this moment in almighty ſtrength,
And proweſs irreſiſtibly divine,
That formerly it was in ages paſt,
When Britain bravely triumph'd and ſubdu'd,
Where'er her troops, her warlike troops, advanc'd?
Are not thy knowledge, wiſdom, and thy ſkill,
Unerring, and above conception far,
As yonder ſtarry concave from the earth,
Vaſtly beyond what eloquence can paint,
Ev'n eloquence of angels; juſt the ſame,
As eminent and infinitely great
Now, as in times preceeding, when the world
Beheld, with admiration and ſurpriſe,
Judgment, diſcretion, and ſuperior ſenſe,
Uprightneſs, foreſight and diſcernment keen,
Maſterly conduct, and experience ſage,
Concordance, and firm unanimity,

In

In all Britannia's ſenates ſhine ſupreme,
In each deliberation and reſolve?

What then inſpires her ſons with indolence?
Baſe, infamous, and daſtard indolence!
Indolence, how pernicious to her iſles!
How wiſh'd for, keenly wiſh'd for, by the Gaul;
The Gaul inferior, but when it prevails;
And loudly hail'd with ſhouts of vaunting joy,
Vainly triumphing, proud, perfidious foe,
In her diſhonour and notorious ſhame!
Indolence, in ſucceeding times to come,
Scarcely to merit credit or belief,
Unprecedented, to our ſires unknown!
From which yon ſun, avoiding to behold,
Veils in a friendly cloud his bluſhing face;
Which fame, indulgent to her hapleſs iſles,
Calls for oblivion ever to conceal,
Hid in her caverns of profoundeſt night!
Sure it muſt be ſome foul malignant cauſe,
Of venom and the rankeſt poiſon full:
A cauſe which hell and devils patroniſe:
A cauſe but little gueſs'd at, or deſpis'd,
Tho' general and ſtrong its influence:
And not that thou, Jehovah, King of kings,
O arrogant, abſurd and impious thought!
Art now impotent to aſſiſt and aid,
Or leſs a God in ev'ry excellence,
Eternal, uncreated, infinite;
Than when thy lamp, yon ſun, imperial orb,

On our forefathers ſhone with genial rays,
Smiling, delighted, on their virtuous deeds.

WHAT then can anſwer this deſcription giv'n,
With half ſo much propriety, as vice?
Vice, fountain-head of ev'ry hated ill;
And bold invader on thy ſacred rights.
This is, indeed, the cauſe, the baneful cauſe,
Of all Britannia's late misfortunes prov'd;
Her ſad miſcarriages, and ill ſucceſs.
And could ſhe hope, all-juſt and righteous Lord
Of heav'n and earth, thy darling attributes,
Unſpotted holineſs, and purity!
Could ſhe once dare thy guidance to expect,
That valour, and that matchleſs fortitude,
Which thou alone can'ſt in the boſom plant,
And make triumphant in the fields of blood:
To crown her arms, and conqueſt to inſure,
The enemy diſcomfited, or ſlain,
Scatter'd before her ſquadrons on the plain,
Like yonder flock chas'd by the hoſtile wolf:
Could ſhe, I ſay, preſumpt'ouſly expect
Such favours, ſo diſtinguiſh'd, from on high,
When, in her ſenates and her courts, prevail'd;
Her courts, where only virtue ſhould preſide;
Brib'ry, corruption, and venality,
Fraud, cunning, perfidy, and party-rage,
Gaming, voluptuouſneſs, and luxury,
That ſordid, circumſcrib'd and ſelfiſh zeal,
Which individuals for themſelves exert:

The love of money, root of ev'ry ill,
Emolument, and ſplendid glitt'ring ſhow,
Ever admir'd, tho' e'er ſo ill obtain'd:
Predominant, alas! o'er public good,
The good of millions, and the common weal?
When thro' her cities, and imperial towns,
Adown whoſe ſtreets religion, like a ſtream,
A rapid ſtream, untainted, ſtill ſhould flow;
Pernicious pleaſures, and amuſements reign,
And ev'ry monſtrous and abhorrent crime?
True, ſome of her ungrateful ſons have dar'd,
How frantic and rebellious the attempt!
To diſpoſſeſs thee of thy throne divine,
In majeſty tranſcendently auguſt:
To wrench the thunder from thy potent arm,
And turn thee headlong from thy regal ſkies;
By mangling and abuſing, (fatal zeal!)
Thy attributes, eſſentials of thy ſelf,
Thy mercy, juſtice, purity and truth,
Diſtorted to their own infernal ends.
But ah, alas! how diſmal in the end!
How big with ruin, and deſtruction ſure!
True, ſhe has trampl'd on thy ſacred laws,
Contemn'd, and ridicul'd thy juſt commands,
And caſt thy hallow'd rites behind her back.
True, ſhe has thrown diſhonour on thy name,
And (monſtrous guilt!) thy oracles deſpis'd;
Thoſe oracles by thy own finger penn'd;
The pride and wonder of th' angelic hoſt;
Big with eternal treaſures of delight;

Per-

Perpetual honours and immortal crowns,
What heav'n could fancy, what thyſelf beſtow!
Theſe, Lord, are truths which none can dare to hide,
Altho' ſo impious and deteſtable;
Naked they ly in full deformity,
In all their height of magnitude diſplay'd,
Delineated in their proper dyes;
Dyes of a more by far than crimſon ſtain,
Expos'd to thy all-ſeeing eye divine:
Thy eye which takes in nature at a glance,
And penetrates the moſt refin'd diſguiſe.
Theſe are enough thy patience to exhauſt,
Thy mercy, goodneſs, and unbounded love;
Arm ev'ry judgment with thy ſharpeſt wrath,
And rouſe thy keeneſt vengeance to deſtroy.
If leſs, ought leſs than thy deific ſelf!
But, O! great God, beneficent and kind;
Kind and beneficent to one, to all!
Thou mild, indulgent father of the ſkies,
On whoſe calm brow benignant mercy ſmiles,
And goodneſs ever prevalent with thee!
Let their vaſt ſize, of more than mountain's bulk,
To mole-hills ſink before thy leſs'ning eye;
Their deep-dy'd tincture fade entire away,
As fade the ſhades before the riſing ſun.
If not, how ſhall Britannia face the foe;
The foe enrag'd, and furious to deſtroy,
As the rous'd tyger, eager for his prey?
A foe commiſſion'd from thyſelf to ſcourge
An impious, guilty, and unworthy land,

Abandon'd and atrocious in thy ſight!
A foe, as num'rous as the ſpangl'd ſtars,
Or yonder countleſs ſand upon the ſhore!
A foe, renown'd for military ſkill,
For judgment clear, and ſubtlety profound;
Accurate diſcernment, and experience, learn'd
In many a bloody fight, and martial toil;
For wiſdom, prudence, and for genius fam'd,
In the production of her ſchemes and plans,
And valour in their execution too;
Conſummate art, and maſterly deſign!
A foe, reſtrain'd by no prevailing tye
Of virtue, and of goodneſs; quite eſtrang'd
To thoſe exalted ſentiments that flow
From freedom, candor, and humanity!
A ſlave to tyranny's deſpotic ſway,
And forc'd by chains, not duty, to obey!
A foe, rapacious, fraudulent, and proud,
Thirſty for blood, avidious of ſpoils;
And, which is ſtill more formidable yet,
Her keen, her mortal, and relentleſs foe!
Shall ſhe blow loud the trumpet's martial note,
And bid the drums in hoſtile concert join,
To fire the breaſt, and fill the ſoul with war?
Shall ſhe prepare her armies for the field,
Her armies glitt'ring in emburniſh'd ſteel:
Unſheath'd their flaming ſwords to ſlaughter round,
And charg'd their mortars with deſtructive plague?
Shall ſhe expand the canvas to the wind,
That wings her potent navies thro' the deep,

Mann'd

Mann'd with the flower of her choſen youth,
And with bright rows of brazen engines arm'd;
Pregnant with thunders, and exploſive ſtorms,
With horrors big, with ruin, and with death,
Ready to burſt, and ſweep whole crouds away?
In vain; for thou look'ſt down from heav'n with ſcorn,
And laugh'ſt at all their idle childiſh ſchemes,
Their airy dreams of triumph and ſucceſs.

Shall ſhe ſhoot roaring tempeſts from her guns?
The tempeſt rattles, but is loſt in air;
Nor wafts one miſchief to the adverſe ranks.
Shall ſhe advance her ſtandards to the fight,
And bear her harneſs'd courſers on the foe,
To front the battle, now begun to bleed?
In vain, the ſtandards drop down one by one,
Their trembling bearers glad to turn their backs:
Her courſers gall'd with bullets, or tranſfix'd
With keen-edg'd weapons, tumble to the ground,
Or backwards bend their frantic, found'ring courſe,
Trampling their maſters gaſping underneath,
Frighted ev'n at the firing of a gun.

The day is loſt; Britannia quits the field,
The conqu'ring field, won by a braver hoſt,
And o'er the champain ſcours her ſcatter'd way:
Perhaps perſuaded now, tho' to her coſt,
How vain a thing it is to boaſt of troops,
Or on her ſwords and cannons to rely,
When left, alas! to fight the field herſelf;

Abandon'd

Abandon'd by thy aid, ſupreme of hoſts.
The day is loſt; huzza's invade the ſkies,
Huzza's triumphing in her foul diſgrace,
And vaunting o'er her hills of reeking ſlain,
And tepid rivers of her choiceſt blood.

But theſe are not the only ills that ſhall
Diſtreſs her hapleſs iſlands, and confound
Her wiſdom, and her councils; plagues on plagues
Accumulated, and with horror big;
Shall over-run each corner of her land,
With fury and vindictive judgments arm'd;
Juſtly deſerv'd, from thy avenging hand,
For all the guilt and complicated ſins,
Heinous to tell, of her degen'rate ſons,
Degenerated from their priſtine worth,
Worth avitous, diſtinguiſh'd, and high-born!
If not repented of with eager haſte,
If not aton'd for by a ſpeedy change.
For can I e'er forget poor Lisbon's fate,
Her fate how pregnant with ſevere diſtreſs!
How fatal and calamitous, beyond
The moſt pathetic paint of rhetoric,
Or what the livelieſt fancy can conceive!
Peculiar, overwhelming: mocking aid,
Aid, Lord, inferior thy powerful word,
Thy word which brings alarming judgments on,
And which commands them to retire again!
When the dread eart' quake, formidable ill,
Ruſh'd from her deep-impriſon'd caves below,

Con-

Convulsive, rapid, and impetuous;
Where she long slept, innocuous to the world;
And O that she had never, never wak'd!
Attended by her magazines of fire,
Big with explosion and sulphureous rage;
And shook the hills and mountains from their roots,
Tumbl'd her lofty structures to the ground,
The highest palace with the lowest cote,
And laid her fame and glory in the dust!
Can I with ruminating horror view
These aggravated, and afflictive woes,
Indeed the consquences of her crimes,
And just rewards, most High, of her deserts;
Nor weep, nor sigh, nor bleed, for Albion's isles,
Beyond her, if 'tis possible, in guilt,
Guilt, vengeance-crying, ills-denouncing guilt;
And thus obnoxious to the same distress,
Thy dreadful frown, thy tenfold wrath divine,
(Which, if exerted, would with ease destroy
The whole innumerable race of man,
And nature sink at one tremendous crush)
To make a heap of rubbish all her towns,
Wrapt in the flames, or thrown in ruins down;
And bury all her offspring in the grave!
But O! if mercy, smiling mercy, Lord,
Can find a place in thy celestial mind;
And that it can, ten thousand tongues declare,
Tongues eloquent with gratitude and praise;
If pity and compassion, thine supreme,
Can smooth the frown on thy tremendous brow,
And spread forgiving sweetness o'er thy face,

And who that ever ſaw the ſun ariſe,
But will with ſhouts of triumph ſay, they can!
Then, O avert thy judgments from her iſles,
On ev'ry hand as well from harm ſecur'd,
By thy almighty guardianſhip divine,
As by the ambient ocean girt around,
From bold invaſions of audacious foes,
And hoſtile inroads of a foreign clime.
Judgments, in whatſoever forms array'd,
Plague, famine, peſtilence, or fire, or ſword,
Convulſive earthquakes, inundations vaſt.
Are there not ſome illuſtrious ſacred ones
Thro' all her iſles, perhaps unknown to fame,
And buried in oblivion's calm retreat,
Obſcurity, their glory, as their lot;
Whoſe conſcious boſoms warm devotion fires,
And pure religion, ſuch as Jeſus taught,
Thy darling Son, and Saviour of the world!
(Thanks to thy goodneſs) recommends to thee,
As proper objects of thy love divine?
Are there not ſome who, proſtrate, bend the knee,
In adoration, gratitude, and praiſe;
To thee eternal, uncreated God;
Both when the ſun aſcends his morning throne,
And when the ev'ning tinges it with gold;
Who feed upon thy ſmiles, and taſte the joys,
The rapt'rous joys, ineffable refin'd,
That flow from rectitude and purity?
Who ſtill enjoy a conſcience undiſturb'd,
And peace, propitious angel, in their breaſt?
Yes, there are ſome; O were their number more;
How happy, how delightful is the thought!

How

How full of conſolation and redreſs,
To ev'ry thinking and judicious mind,
Ev'n in the midſt of threat'ning dangers nigh,
And gath'ring ſtorms thick glooming o'er our heads;
A foreign arm uplifted to deſtroy,
The arm of France, that butcher of mankind,
And bloody tyrant of the continent;
And death and murder ſculking at our doors,
Stain'd with the reeking gore of thouſands ſlain,
Unſated yet, and ſtill a-thirſt for more!
Were it not this, Britannia, long ere now,
Had fall'n a victim to thy wrath divine,
Thy wrath how unſupportable by man?
Her very name and being quite extinct.
O then encreaſe their numbers more and more,
Till yonder ſtars be counted one by one,
And this enormous aggregate of ſand;
Nor yet expreſs their growing multitudes!
That ſhe may be renown'd for piety,
As for her fame, her martial fame, and wealth;
That all her foes may tremble at her name,
Her name which carries armies in the ſound;
Nor dare to face her in th' embattl'd field:
That wiſdom and ſucceſs may ſtill attend
Her undertakings, councils and reſolves!
Thus ſhall ſhe ſhine the wonder of the world,
Still crown'd with glory and diſtinguiſh'd praiſe;
Thus ever be the darling of thy care
First in the annals of immortal fame.

FINIS.

ERRATUM.

Page 11. line 1. for *around the throne* ? read *around thee thrown* ?